

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE STARS.

I lay at my ease in my little boat,
Fast moored to the shore of the pond,
And looked up through the trees that swayed
in the breeze
At God's own sky beyond.

And I thought of the want and the sin in the
world,
And the pain and the grief they bring,
And I marvelled at God for spreading abroad
Such sorrow and suffering.

Evening came sweeping over the earth,
And the sky grew dim and gray
And faded from sight; and I grumbled at
Night
For stealing my sky away.

Then out of the dark just the speck of a face
Peeped forth from its window bars;
And I laughed to see it smile at me:
I had not thought of the stars!

There are millions of loving thoughts and
deeds,
All ripe for awakening,
That never would start from the world's cold
heart
But for sorrow and suffering.

Yes, the blackening night is sombre and cold,
And the day was warm and fine;
And yet, if the day never faded away,
The stars would never shine!

—*Robert Beverly Hale.*

THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD.

"The church of the living God."—1 TIM. iii. 15.

As no aggregation of dead particles will
make a living body, so only members in
each of whom God's spirit stirs will make
a living church. We speak, indeed,—for
such, unhappily, is the general theory of
Christendom,—as if the soul of man had by
nature no life in itself, and our religious in-
stitutions were designed to *create* it; but as
well might we say that it is the arrange-
ments of domestic life, and not the mighty
and solemn power of nature, that forms and
sustains the relations of families. We look
upon a church as the necessary product
of the religious sentiment, in our nature,
as we look upon a home as an inevitable
result of natural affections; and just as an
ill-constituted family, instead of fulfilling
its office of educating the heart to all gentle-
ness, patience, and true Christian heroism,
may without every dear hope and utterly
extinguish domestic peace and love, so an
ill-constituted church may enfeeble the
spirit that gave it birth, dry up the springs
of religion, make us drink at cisterns and
reservoirs instead of at the well-heads of
truth, quench the individual life, substitute
natural things for personal faithfulness to
God, and give us what is called *church*
fellowship, sectarian clanship, for the charity
of the gospel, for the heart of Christ.

Now what we want is a church of the
living God; that is, a church in which God
is a living God to every member of it, in which
God is a Fountain Spirit communicating
himself to each individual heart.

As to our conception of the perfect ele-
ments of such a church, we must reascend
to Christ, be placed by him in his own posi-

tion of immediate communion with the Father, from communion with the Father receive the spirit of a son, and, if a son, then of a brother toward all God's family, and so build our church upon his foundation; in the language of the apostle, become, each one of us a "living stone" in that spiritual temple which is the body of Christ,—the fellowship of all those who share his relations to our God.

The aim of each Christian man is to form *himself* after the image of the perfect Son. The aim of each Christian church or community is to form a brotherhood every member of which shall be animated by a spirit of cordial co-operation, and, as the soul rules the body, the same God work all in all. A community of men professing to realize the Christian idea of a spiritual brotherhood, with the Son of Man for their image of the Father, for their picture of true life, their promise and pattern of eternal destiny, *the Man* in whom God's idea of humanity was fully manifested,—and striving to maintain with heaven and earth the relations that he sustained,—associating together to lend one another mutual encouragement and sympathy in these aspirations and endeavors,—this would constitute a church of the living God.

Christ contemplated the gradual growth of a *church universal* as the characteristic and peculiar creation of his spirit, the reign of God in each man's soul producing a kingdom of heaven on earth; within each separate heart kindling the same solemn ideas and opening the same living springs, and in their countless homes uniting every form and variety of mind around the throne of Him whose presence is the temple wherein all are gathered, and whose spirit, speaking inwardly to each, contributes the common impulse of love and worship. Such was Christ's vision of his church. Dispersed on earth, removed to heaven, unknown to one another, they are yet of one communion. They kneel with the same image in their souls. They strive, within their several conditions, to embody the same ideal. They know, though in absolute solitude, that the thoughts which are the most sacred and sustaining to themselves make also the inward pulse of every brother's strength. They are fellow-workers when together, and of one heart when separate. This is the church for which Christ prayed, extending his prayer to us: "I pray for them also that shall believe on me through their word, that they also may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they all may be one in us." And what is necessary to the

coming of this reign of God on earth? Only that each one of us should participate in Christ's feeling of a filial relation to his Father, and should desire to embrace his brother man within the fellowship of his spiritual life.—*John Hamilton Thom.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Lord, with what courage and delight
I do each thing,
When thy least breath sustains my wing!
I shine and move,
Like those above,
And, with much gladness,
Quitting sadness,
Make me fair days of every night.
—*Vaughan.*

THE OPTIMIST'S RESOLVE.

I will endeavor to be kind at all times,
both to mankind and animals.

I will be courteous and considerate to the aged, realizing that the burden of their years makes the lightest trouble seem heavy.

I will be gentle to women and little children, with due regard for their weaknesses and frailties. To the sick and afflicted I will be merciful and kind.

I will keep my troubles and heartaches to myself, so that other hearts will not be burdened by the weight of my misfortunes.

I will endeavor at all times to be cheerful, and smile, so that my smile may be an incentive for others to smile. I will endeavor to be unselfish, not striving for more than what is mine in all fairness, and realizing that other people have rights and deserve consideration.

I will earnestly try to avoid saying unkind things to people and about them, realizing that slander is a blow from behind, and the act of a coward, and I know that kind words have eternal life. In short, I will try to make this sad, old world less sad, because I shall never pass this way again. Every influence ignoble or unkind goes out from me like the vapor from the bottle and can never be recalled. This is my resolve, and may the power that rules the world keep me steadfast.—*William J. Robinson.*

There is dew in one flower and not in another, because one opens its cup and takes it, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off. So God rains goodness and mercy as wide as the dew; and, if we lack them, it is because we do not open our hearts to receive him.—*Myrtle.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

"Black Beauty" is offered by Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Dryden's "Poems"; "Thorpe-Regis"; "Annice Wynkoop, Artist"; "The District School as it Was"; "Common People"; "The Greatest Thing in the World," Drummond; "Pansies for Thought," A. D. T. Whitney; Celia Thaxter's "Poems"; "Colonial Dames"; "Good Wives"; "A Letter of Introduction"; "A Little Swiss Sojourn," Howells; "Irish Idyls," Jane Barlow; "The Future of War," Block; "Stories from Blackwood"; "Tales from Shakespeare," Lamb; "Jolly Good Times"; "Festus," Bailey; "Soldiers Three," Kipling; "Ben-Hur"; Rand and McNally's "Condensed History of the World"; Huc's "Travels in Tartary, China, and Thibet"; "Education," Spencer; "The Sunny Side of the Hill," R. N. Carey; "New England By-gones"; "American Note-books," Hawthorne; "People we Pass," Julian Ralph; "Selections from Browning"; "A Browning Courtship, and Other Stories"; "Child's History of England," Dickens; "Paris Sketch Book," "Book of Snobs," and "Stories," Thackeray; Bryant's "Poems."

Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass., offers any one paying postage current numbers of *Literary Digest*, *Modern Priscilla*, and *Collier's*.

REQUESTS.

1. I receive the *Cheerful Letter* regularly, and appreciate its every word so much. Now I come asking if some kind friend will please send me "Lady Rose's Daughter," by Mrs. Humphry Ward, and "Rose of the World," by Agnes and Egerton Castle. Mrs. Arthur Thompson, Granite Springs, Spottsylvania County, Virginia.

2. Vina Wadlington, Palmer Institute, Sedalia, North Carolina, asks for "Pilgrim's Progress."

3. Mr. J. T. Anslett, Inavale, South Dakota, Stanley County, desires a correspondent and exchange of cards.

4. We live in a very lonely place on a small farm, and there are no near neighbors, and we are not able to take papers or buy books, and I have been an invalid for over two years, and not able to do anything but sew and read. I can pass on all that is sent to others who are in need of cheer. I would like good books of any kind and magazines and papers for a sick father. I would like a box of reading or just books sent, any way you can do best. It would pass away many lonesome hours, and would be greatly appreciated by us all. Mrs. R. Leslie Cummings, Buckfield, Maine, Route 1.

5. John W. Davis, Wolf Bayou, Cleburne County, Arkansas, will appreciate any good reading.

6. Mrs. Malinda A. Thomas, Flagg, Virginia, will be glad of the *Cheerful Letter* and any reading.

7. Mrs. A. J. Smith, Rockingham, North Carolina, R. F. D. 1, asks for a dictionary.

8. Messrs. George and Raleigh Martin, Shuff, Virginia, are cripples and invalids, walking on crutches, with rheumatism, members of the church and very poor. They would like reading matter, good books or papers to pass away the lonely hours.

9. The following will be glad of light reading: Mrs. Lena Buckmaster, Grady, Oklahoma; Miss Alma Grisson, Mrs. L. A. Simmons, Mrs. Dora Dumas, all of Reck, Oklahoma.

10. The *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Home Magazine* are asked for by Mrs. Quinnie Dumas, Reck, Oklahoma.

11. I wish to thank all my friends who have remembered me in the past. I enjoy reading the *Cheerful Letter*. I could not part from it. It may seem that I have been rather tardy in expressing my heartfelt thanks to all who have generously responded to my requests and need. Indeed, it is impossible to thank you as much as I wish to do. I appreciate your kindness. May the Lord bless each of you in your noble work.

I take delight in rendering to each of you many good wishes. I like Unitarian literature because it is broad in its views. Any aid in the future in the way of books will be appreciated. I need books. I hope some of my friends will send me an *Encyclopædia*. Rev. W. R. Chapman, Bealeton, Virginia.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

LIFE WITH ELDERS.*

Have you ever read "Amyas Leigh"? "Amyas Leigh" is an historical novel, written by Charles Kingsley, an English author. His object, or one of his objects, was to extol the old system of education,—the system which trained such men as Walter Raleigh and Philip Sidney.

The system was this. When a boy had grown up to be fourteen or fifteen years old, he was sent away from home by his father to some old friend of his father, who took him into his train or company for whatever service or help he could render. And so, of a sudden, the boy found himself constantly in the company of men, to learn, as he could, what they were doing and to become a man himself under their contagion and sympathy.

We have abandoned this system. We teach boys and girls as much from books as we can, and we give them all the fewer chances to learn from people or from life.

None the less do the boys and girls meet men and women. And I think it is well worth our while, in these papers, to see how much good and how much pleasure they can get from the companionship.

I reminded you of Jonas's wise advice about little children. Do you remember what Jonas told Rollo, when Rollo was annoyed because his father would not take him to drive? Rollo was very fond of driving with his father and mother, but he thought he did not often get invited, and that, when he invited himself, he was often refused. He confided in Jonas on the subject. Jonas told him substantially two things. First, that his father would not ask him any the more often because he teased him for an invitation. The teasing was in itself wrong, and did not present him in an agreeable light to his father and mother, who wanted a pleasant companion, if they wanted any. The second was that Rollo did not make himself agreeable when he did drive. He

soon wanted water to drink. Or he wondered when they should get home. Or he complained because the sun shone in his eyes. He made what the innkeepers called "a great row generally," and so, when his father and mother took their next drive, if they wanted rest and quiet, they were very apt not to invite him. Rollo took the hint. The next time he had an invitation to drive, he remembered that he was the invited party, and bore himself accordingly. He did not "pitch in" in the conversation.

He did not obtrude his own affairs. He answered when he was spoken to, listened when he was spoken to, and found that he was well rewarded by attending to the things which interested his father and mother and to the matters they were discussing. And so it came about that Rollo, by not offering himself again as captain of the party, became a frequent and a favorite companion.

Now in that experience of Rollo there is involved a good deal of the philosophy of the intercourse between young people and their elders. Yes, I know what you are saying, Theodora and George, just as well as if I heard you. You are saying that you are sure you do not want to go among the old folks, certainly you shall not go if you are not wanted. But I wish to observe that sometimes you must go among them whether you want to or not; and, if you must, there are two things to be brought about,—first, that you get the utmost possible good out of the occasion; and, second, that the older people do. So, if you please, we will not go into a huff about it, but look the matter in the face, and see if there is not some simple system which governs the whole.

Do you remember perhaps, George, the first time you found out what good reading there was in men's books,—that day when you had sprained your ankle, and found Mayne Reid palled a little bit,—when I brought you Lossing's "Field-Book of the Revolution," as you sat in the wheel-chair, and you read away upon that for hours? Do you remember how, when you were getting well, you used to limp into my room, and I let you hook down books with the handle of your crutch, so that you read the English Parrys and Captain Back, and then got hold of my great Schoolcraft and Catlin, and finally improved your French a good deal, before you were well, on the thirty-nine volumes of Garnier's "Imaginary Voyages"? You remember that? So do I. That was your first experience in grown-up people's books,—books that are not written down to the supposed comprehension of children. Now there is an experience just

* This article seems to be addressed more to young persons than to parents. But it is worth reading by those of all ages.

like that open to each of you, Theodora and George, whenever you will choose to avail yourselves of it in the society of grown-up people, if you will only take that society simply and modestly, and behave like the sensitive boy and girl that you really are.

Do not be tempted to talk among people who are your elders. Those horrible scrapes that Frank used to get into; such as Harry once got into, arose, like most scrapes in this world, from their want of ability to hold their tongues. Speak when you are spoken to, not till then, and then get off with as little talk as you can. After the second French revolution my friend Walter used to wish that there might be a third, so that he might fortunately be in the gallery of the revolutionary convention just when everything came to a dead-lock; and he used to explain to us, as we sat on the parallel bars together at recess, how he would just spring over the front of the gallery, swing himself across to the canopy above the Speaker's seat, and slide down a column to the Tribune, there "where the orators speak, you know," and how he would take advantage of the surprise to address them in their own language, how he would say "*Français,—mes frères*" (which means "Frenchmen,—brothers"), and how, in such strains of burning eloquence, he would set all right so instantaneously that he would be proclaimed Dictator, placed in a carriage instantly, and drawn by an adoring and grateful people to the Palace of the Tuileries, to live there for the rest of his natural life. it was natural for Walter to think he could do all that, if he got the chance. But I remember, in planning it out, he never got much beyond "*Français,—mes frères*," and in forty years this summer, in which time four revolutions have taken place in France, Walter has never found the opportunity. It is seldom, very seldom, that in a mixed company it is necessary for a boy of sixteen or a girl of fifteen to get the others out of a difficulty. You may burn to interrupt, and to cry out, "*Français,—mes frères*," but you had better bite your tongue, and sit still. Do not explain that Rio Janeiro is the capital of Brazil. In a few minutes it will appear that they all knew it, though they did not mention it, and, by your waiting you will save yourself horrible mortification.

Meanwhile you are learning things in the nicest way in the world. Do not you think that Amyas Leigh enjoyed what he learned of Guiana and the Orinoco River much more than you enjoy all you have ever learned of it? Yes. He learned it all by going there

in the company of Walter Raleigh and sundry other such men. Suppose, George, that you could get the engineers, Mr. Burnell and Mr. Philipson, to take you with them when they run the new railroad line, this summer, through the passes of the Adirondack Mountains. Do you not think you should enjoy that more even than reading Mr. Murray's book, far more than studying levelling and surveying in the first class at the High School? Get a chance to carry chain for them, if you can. Come round to me some afternoon, and I will tell you in an hour all the school-boys learned while you were away in the mountains,—all, I mean, that you cannot make up in a well-used month after your return.

And please to remember this, all of you, though it seems impossible. Remember it as a fact, even if you cannot account for it, that though we all seem so old to you, just as if we were dropping into our graves, we do not, in practice, feel any older than we did when we were sixteen. True, we have seen the folly of a good many things which you want to see the folly of. We do not therefore, in practice, sit on the rocks in the spray quite so near the water as you do; and we go to bed a little earlier, even on moonlight nights. This is the reason that, when the whole merry party meet at breakfast, we are a little more apt to be in our places than—some young people I know. But, for all that, we do not feel any older than we did when we were sixteen. We enjoy building with blocks as well, and we can do it a great deal better; we like the "Arabian Nights" just as well as we ever did; and we can laugh at a good charade quite as loud as any of you can. So you need not take it on yourselves to suppose that, because you are among "old people,"—by which you mean married people,—all is lost, and that the hours are to be stupid and forlorn. The best series of parties, lasting year in and out, that I have ever known, were in Worcester, Mass., where old and young people associated together more commonly and frequently than in any other town I ever happened to live in, and where, for that very reason, society was on the best footing. I have seen a boy of twelve take a charming lady, three times his age, down Pearl Street on his sled. And I have ridden in a riding party to Paradise with twenty other horsemen and with twenty-one horsewomen, of whom the youngest, Theodora, was younger than you are, and quite as pretty, and the oldest very likely was a judge on the Supreme Bench. I will not say that she did not like to have one of the judges

ride up and talk with her quite as well as if she had been left to Ferdinand Fitz-Mortimer. I will say that some of the Fitz-Mortimer tribe did not ride as well as they did ten years after.

Above all, dear children, work out in life the problem or the method by which you shall be a great deal with your father and your mother. There is no joy in life like the joy you can have with them. Fun or learning, sorrow or jollity, you can share it with them as with nobody beside. You are just like your father, Theodora, and you, George, I see your mother's face in you as you stand behind the bank counter, and I wonder what you have done with your curls. I say you are just like. I am tempted to say you are the same. And you can and you will draw in from them notions and knowledges, lights on life, and impulses and directions which no books will ever teach you, and which it is a shame to work out from long experience, when you can—as you can—have them as your birthright.—*Edward Everett Hale, in "How to Do It."*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE FLICKER, HIGH-HOLE, OR YELLOW-HAMMER

(*Colaptes auratus*).

Though the Flicker is to be found with us during the winter, his loud ringing "*if-if-if-if-if-if-if*" is especially associated with the spring smell of the damp woods-earth and the first glad awakening. Sometimes it is only a single note, a loud, far-reaching "clape" that makes our pulses leap with the assurance that the cold silence of winter is broken and spring has come. At the sound of the familiar voice we hurry toward it, but may have a long distance to hunt, for it carries far through the woods. The first glimpse of the splendid great bird repays us for our tramp. High up on a tree-trunk he may be clinging, woodpecker fashion, with his back to us, the scarlet patch on the back of his neck showing to good advantage. How strong and powerful he seems!

To the beginner, who has puzzled his brains and strained his ears and eyes over the faint notes and the confusing forms of small migrants vanishing through the tree-tops, the sight of such a big, strikingly marked bird at rest is a double satisfaction. There is no mistaking his call, there is no mistaking his person. Even when he flies—with undulating motion—the big, round,

white spot at the base of his tail marks him as far as he can be seen.

Once placed in the woods, the Flicker should be kept track of. Soon his companions will come, and with the soft, spring days his "thoughts will turn to love"; and then he will merit the closest attention, for he is a gallant wooer, full of original ways. "It is an exceedingly interesting and amusing sight," Major Bendire tells us, "to see a couple of males paying their addresses to a coy and coquettish female. The apparent shyness of the suitors as they sidle up to her, and as quickly retreat again, the sly glances given, as one peeps from behind a limb, watching the other—playing bo-peep—seems very human. . . .

"The defeated suitor takes his rejection quite philosophically, and retreats in a dignified manner." To this Mr. Burroughs adds of the Flicker wooer: "He spreads his tail, he puffs out his breast, he throws back his head, and then bends his body to the right and to the left, uttering all the while a curious, musical hiccough." Surely, his lady should be flattered by such adulation.

When it comes to housekeeping, the Flicker retires to an old stub (stump?) or tree-trunk, but his proceedings may be watched if he is convinced of your good intentions. The sight of the large entrance hole always stirs delightful anticipations, for Monsieur "Pique-bois-jaune," as he is called in Louisiana, is a character worth studying. Mr. Brewster has given us a most interesting description of a nest he watched, and Mr. Manley Hardy, who has also studied the birds, familiarly, tells us that he has been permitted to feed the young with strawberries while they were still in the nest. He was obliged to put the berries in their bills at first, but afterward the nestlings would come up to the hole and look out when they heard him coming, acting, he flattered himself, "just as if the old birds were feeding them."

The parents feed the young by regurgitation, which is very fortunate, as bringing food by the bill-full to such large broods would be a good deal like feeding a giant with a teaspoon. Audubon once found a nest containing eighteen young birds and three eggs.

Though the Flicker young have the good taste to like strawberries, the family food is ants. In times of grasshopper plagues the Woodpeckers, very philanthropically, turn to and help kill off the pests; but at ordinary times they work more for the housewife and florist, destroying the ants that invade the pantry and foster insect lice.

Almost half of the total food of the Flicker is ants, 3,000 of which were found in each of two stomachs,—stomachs whose owners apparently were not in great need of a tonic. This explains what the birds are doing when they are seen on the ground, and scared up from ant-hills in old pastures. The ground habit of the Flicker is so dominant that his dress conforms to the color of the earth. His tongue, too, is unusually long, and has a rough surface, to which his sticky saliva glues the ants which he picks up or probes out of the ant-hills.

Like many innocent birds, the Flicker has been accused of eating corn; but, in reality, only 5 out of 230 Flicker stomachs contained any, and the bird is one of the most useful we have.—*Florence A. Merriam, in "Birds of Village and Field."*

Adult Male: back brownish, barred with black; throat pinkish-fawn and rest of under parts lighter, spotted with black; black stripes on sides of throat and black crescent on breast; under side of wings and tail yellow. *Adult Female:* similar, but without black streaks on sides of throat. Length, 12 inches.

Geographic Distribution.—North America west to Alaska and the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains; breeds throughout its range, and winters from Illinois and Massachusetts southward.

MACCK, THE PARROT.

After a few days of storm I took Mack out of doors, with his usual light blanket thrown over his cage. He looked thoughtfully about, and said,—

"I thought it was cold! Mackie likes it! Do you like it?"

A staging was going up on a neighbor's house, where the piazza needed repairs. Mack grew weary of the pounding and clanging on the tinned roof, and called out to the workman:—

"Aren't you tired of that? I am! Do you like it? Ugh! Ugh!"

I asked him one day if he was comfortable. His reply almost seemed satirical,—

"Do you like toast?" Instantly he added, "Don't tell of that!"

His friend "Ethel," in an impassioned manner and tone, recited to him "The Watch on the Rhine." Alarmed by her dramatic intensity, he called to Aunt Lu, in the next room, "Louie! Louie!" Seeing that she was in league with Ethel and laughing at his alarm, he called to me, "Helen! Helen!" I was forty miles away; and

getting no response, he called out to a boy-friend in the neighborhood,—

"Sterling! Sterling!!!" He was appeased, however, as soon as "Ethel" returned to common life and laughed and played with him.

As one of the family returned from a visit to the post-office, he inquired,—

"Get any letters?"

I had been in Boston all day, returning at 7 P.M. Mack welcomed me with outspread wings, and little cries of joy. I asked,—

"How are you, Mackie?"

"How is yourself?" was his polite interrogation.

The singing of the first birds of spring is always disheartening to him.* This little story seems hardly credible:—

"Mackie, hear the birds sing!"

"Do you like it?"

"Yes."

"Do you like living?"

"Yes."

"I don't care about it."

At tea-time Aunt Fanny said, "You need not cut any bread for me!" But I did; and Mack asked, "Did it do any good?" We all laughed, whereupon he said deprecatingly, "I said 'e best that I could."

I once asked him if he thought that he had better get up earlier in the morning. His reply was,—

"I think of it!" adding indifferently, "I don't care anything about it!"

In a merrier mood, Mack exclaimed,—

"Now I'm going to laugh!" And he—sneered!

When in a great burst of joyousness, Mack has to be put, sometimes, into another room. One day this had no effect, and we shut him up alone. The noise ceased; and, when I went into the room, he said:

"I never would have thought it!"

Evidently, he was much chagrined. So I said:—

"Never mind, Mack! Pretty soon I'll come in and give you some breakfast."

"I don't care about it!" he replied, growling deeply.

But his mortification in time gave way before a taste of his favorite dry toast, mashed potato, and a snip of English bacon, of which he is only too fond.—*Helen M. Knowlton.*

Great lives give, small lives demand. We can rank ourselves with the great or the small in spirit, as we prefer. What we give, not what we grasp for, determines our place.—*Selected.*

* Because he cannot imitate them.

THE SICK IN WORKHOUSES.

One of my superstitions has long been that, if any particular task seems to us at the first outlook specially against the grain, it will continually happen that in the order of things it comes knocking at our door, and practically saying to our consciences, "Are you going to get up and do what is wanted, or sit still and please yourself with something else?" In this guise of disagreeability, workhouse visiting first presented itself to me. Miss Carpenter frequently mentioned the workhouse as a place which ought to be looked after, and which she believed sadly wanted voluntary inspection; but the very name conveyed to me such an impression of dreary hopelessness that I shrank from the thought. When Saint Paul coupled *Hope* with Faith and Charity, he might have said, "These three are one," for without the Hope of achieving some good (or at least of stopping some evil) it is hard to gird ourselves to any practical exertion for our fellow-creatures. To lift up the criminal and perishing classes of the community and cut off the root of crime and vice by training children in morality and religion,—this was a soul-inspiring idea. But to bring a small modicum of cheer to the aged and miserable paupers, who may be supposed generally to be undergoing the inevitable penalties of idle or drunken lives, was far from equally uplifting! However, my first chance visit to St. Peter's in Bristol with Miss Elliot showed me so much to be done, so many claims to sympathy and pity, and the sore lack of somebody, unconnected officially with the place, to meet them, that I at once felt that here I must put in my oar.

The condition of the English workhouses generally, at that period (1859) was very different from what it is now. I visited many of them in the following year or two in London and the provincial towns, and *this* is what I saw. The sick lay on wretched beds, fit only for able-bodied tramps, and were nursed mostly by old pauper women of the very lowest class. The infirm wards were very frequently placed in the worst possible positions. I remember one (in London) which resounded all day long with din from an iron-foundry just beneath, so that one could not hear one's self speak; and another of which the windows could not be opened in the hottest weather, because carpets were taken to be beaten in the court below. The treatment of the pauper children was no less deplorable. They were joyless, spiritless little creatures, without "mothering" (as blessed Mrs. Senior said a few years

later), without toys, without the chance of learning anything practical for use in after-life, even to the lighting of a fire or cooking a potato. The girls wore the hideous workhouse cotton frocks, not half warm enough to keep them healthy in those bare, draughty wards, and heavy hob-nailed shoes which acted like galley-slaves' bullets on their feet when they were turned to "play" in a high-walled, sunless yard, which was sometimes, as I have seen, six inches deep in coarse gravel. As to the infants, if they happened to have a good motherly matron, it was so far well, though even she (mostly busy elsewhere) could do but little to make the crabbed old pauper nurses kind and patient. But how often, we might ask, were the workhouse matrons of those days really kind-hearted and motherly? Of course, they were selected by the gentlemen guardians (there were no ladies then on the Boards) for quite other merits; and, as Miss Carpenter once remarked to me from the depth of her experience,—

"There never yet was a man so clever but the matron of an Institution could bamboozle him about every department of her business!"

I have sat in the infants' ward when an entire Board of about two dozen gentlemen tramped through it, for what they considered to be "inspection"; and anything more helpless and absurd than those masculine "authorities" appeared as they glanced at the little cots (never daring to open one of them) while the awakened babies screamed at them in chorus, it has seldom been my lot to witness.

Miss Elliot had been in the habit of visiting a poor old woman, who had formerly lived close to the Deanery and had been removed to the workhouse; and one day she asked me to accompany her on her errand. This being over, I wandered off to the various wards where other poor women, and also the old and invalid men, spent their dreary days, and soon perceived how large a field was open for usefulness in the place.

The first matter which occupied us was the condition of the sick and infirm paupers,—first, of the women only, later of both men and women. The good master and matron admitted us quite freely to the wards, and we saw and knew everything which was going on. St. Peter's was an exceptional workhouse in many respects. Able-bodied paupers and casuals were lodged elsewhere and were not admitted here. There were only the sick, the aged, the infirm, the *insane*, and epileptic patients and lying-in women.

Notes of Cases, taken at the Time.

"In the surgical ward are some eight or ten patients, all in painful diseases. One is a young girl dying of consumption, complicated with the most awful wounds on her poor limbs. 'But they don't hurt so bad,' she says, 'as any one would think who looked at them; and it will soon be all over. I was just thinking it was four years to-day since I was brought into the penitentiary' (it was after an attempt to drown herself after a sad life at Aldershot); 'and now I have been here three years. God has been very good to me, and brought me safe when I didn't deserve it.' Over her head stands a print of the Lost Sheep, and she likes to have the parable read to her. Very soon that sweet, fair young face, as innocent as I have ever seen in the world, will bear no more marks of pain. Life's whole tragedy will have ended, and she is only just nineteen!"

A few weeks later, on Easter Sunday morning, when the rising sun was shining into the curtainless ward, the few patients who were awake saw this poor girl, who had not been able to raise herself or sit upright for many weeks, suddenly start forward, sitting straight up in bed, with her arms lifted and an expression of ecstasy on her face and something like a cry of joy on her lips. Then she fell back, and all was over. The incident, which was in every way striking and affecting, helped me to recall the conviction (set forth in my "Peak in Darien"), that the dying do, sometimes, catch a glimpse of blessed figures waiting for them on the threshold.

"A little way off lies a woman dying in severest sufferings which have lasted long, and may yet last for weeks. Such part of her poor face as may be seen expresses almost angelic patience and submission, and the little she can say is all of gratitude to God and man. On the box beside her bed there stands usually a cup with a few flowers, or even leaves or weeds,—something to which, in the midst of that sickening disease, she can look for beauty. When we bring her flowers, her pleasure is almost too affecting to witness. She says she remembers when she used to climb the hedgerows to gather them in the 'beautiful country.'"

Among the few ways open to us of relieving the miseries of these sick wards and of the parallel ones on the other side occupied by male sufferers were the following:—the introduction of a few easy-chairs with cushions for those who could sit by the fire in winter, and whose thinly clothed frames could not bear the benches; also bed-rests,

—long, knitted ones, fastened to the lower posts of the bed and passed behind the patient's back, so as to form a kind of sitting hammock,—very great comforts where there is only one small bolster or pillow and the patient wants to sit up in bed. Occasionally we gave little packets of good tea, work-house tea at that time being almost too nauseous to drink. We also brought pictures to hang on the walls. These we bought colored and cheaply framed or varnished. Their effect upon the old women, especially pictures of children, was startling. One poor soul who had been lying opposite the same blank wall for twenty years, when I laid one of the colored engravings on her bed preparatory to hanging it before her, actually *kissed* the face of the little child in the picture, and burst into tears.—*Frances Power Cobbe.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

BOSTON, Dec. 6, 1840.

My dear James,—Herewith I send you Dr. Channing's new book which is just out. To-day is a great snow-storm, the first we have had. Nothing material (nor spiritual) has transpired since I last wrote you; except indeed, Anna Ward's appearance at our conversation parties, which she animates and beautifies very much. I mean Margaret's conversations. The last one was on "The Art of Life"; and Anna Ward took occasion to unfold her sweet doctrine,—which is also her sweet nature,—that we ought to trust all and love all, and that then all would become worthy of trust and love. She is a fair example of how a beautiful soul speaks, when it does speak. And this reminds me that there is a new book by Coleridge just arrived, which he sends, doubtless, from his high celestial abodes. It is letters to a friend on his religious experience, suggested, as he says himself, by reading in "Wilhelm Meister" the "Confessions of a Fair Saint." Though he considers himself neither fair nor saintly, he thinks his experiences may be edifying.

I promised to tell you how the Phalanx plan goes on; but it is not yet quite arranged, and indeed it is yet uncertain whether it will be formed. There are perhaps a dozen families, all good men and true,—farmers, teachers, mechanics, and preachers,—who wish to unite with Mr. Ripley and commence a new way of life; but they do not own in personal property, put it all together, more than ten or fifteen thousand dollars, how-

ever inestimable their personal worth may be. Mr. Ripley is determined to act with the wisdom of the serpent and make no beginning unless he has money enough to lay a broad foundation, which sum he sets at thirty thousand dollars. In his mind, however, it is very much organized. The plan is to have one large house with suites of apartments for families,—two bedrooms and a sitting-room; then to have some small cottages at about five hundred dollars cost each, for other families; another building close at hand for cooking, etc.; a washing establishment moved by steam or a horse; a large apartment for eating; another room for social purposes, wherein a soirée will be held two or three times a week, and all the inhabitants admitted and urged to come; a library to which all will have access. The government is to be popular, not patriarchal; for Mr. Ripley would never do for a patriarch. The farming is to be conducted on the most liberal and scientific principles of English husbandry, and the earth is to yield her increase in a style hitherto unknown in New England. Wealth is to flow in rapidly, but without corrupting the members of the community; for the luxuries are to be common to all and appropriated by none. Sick persons are to be supported and not lose their time because they are sick, and old persons, too. There is to be no hired labor, I believe,—certainly no persons in the condition of servants. Labor is to be alleviated by machinery and good will. There are to be no religious tests or any other, and he who joins it does it upon the principle of co-operation in labor and a desire of social improvement. What a long history I have written! Yet I have not told you much about it after all. I have no doubt that it will be realized if even on a very small scale. It is astonishing what a wide-spread desire there is for a new mode of life. Every day, almost, Mr. Ripley has a letter or a visit from some one who has for years nourished a desire for this thing and has been sure that it would happen at last. The only misfortune is that he cannot persuade the capitalists of Boston that it would be a good investment of money. He has no doubt of it himself, for he is sure the farm and the school will be quite lucrative. The school is to be thus: so many hours for study; so many for manual labor; so many for play. The scholars are to be paid for all the work they do, and they are to be taught to work as well as to learn lessons. The instruction is to be on the most liberal plan, only somewhat more of science and somewhat less

of dead language than is usual. Mr. Ripley, Mr. William Russell, the elocutionist, George Bradford, Nathaniel Peabody, and perhaps Mr. Emerson, will be the chief teachers. Mother has promised them Thomas for a scholar.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answer to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.

In the nine sentences below appear as many words (one word in each sentence) which, if found and written one below the other, their initials will spell the name of the evening preceding All Saints' Day.

1. Little kernels grow huge trees.
2. John has been away for four weeks.
3. The lake is much lower than last year.
4. The letter was missent.
5. No man needs over a living income.
6. The game was won by one run.
7. Sweden is a country of Europe.
8. Each soldier had his own tent.
9. The meeting was very noisy.

II.

BEHEADINGS.

1. I am a word meaning three united:
Behead me, and I am a kind of coffee.
2. I am a word meaning a correct statement.
Behead me, and I am a girl's name.
3. I am a word meaning a village.
Behead me, and I am possessorship.
4. I am a word meaning to trail.
Behead me, and I am a storm.
5. I am a beaten patch.
Behead me, and I am a distaff.

—Selected.

III.

HALF-SQUARE.

1. One guilty of a heinous crime.
2. Consisting of ebony.
3. Chance.
4. A proposition.
5. A consonant.

IV.

RHOMBOID.

ACROSS.—A market; two animals; to pull; a beautiful garden. DOWNWARDS.—A consonant; a preposition; a color; a weed; insane; a pronoun; a consonant.

V.

PI.

Eht grabenki sawev hadeds ghiih
No a trens dna kocr dubon tosad,
Nad het sowod ginasad a tyrsom ksy,
Hetir tigan rabcenhs tots.

Answers to Puzzles in September Number.

I. A WHEEL.—1. Saddle. 2. Salary.
3. Salmon. 4. Scarce. 5. Senate. 6. Silver. 7. Studio. 8. Survey.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE.—1. Long Island. 2. Block Island. 3. South Sea Islands. 4. Shetland Islands. 5. Cook's Island. 6. Friendly Islands.

III. ADDITIONS. 1. C-oil. 2. D-ale.
3. M-end. 4. L-ace. 5. V-ice.

IV. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Plattsburgh

Great lives give, small lives demand. We can rank ourselves with the great or the small in spirit, as we prefer. What we give, not what we grasp for, determines our place.
Selected.

First the thought, then the action; first the impulse, then the endeavor; first the vision, then the task; first the conception of the ideal, then the realization of the ideal in the life and character.—*W. D. Little.*

It is said there is no thought that is good in the mind but soon looks good in the face. Heart qualities are artists that work, indeed, behind the screen, yet at last they strike through the canvas and become manifest.—*Newell Dwight Hillis.*

With patience and fortitude, with forbearance and compassion, and with eyes opened to the needs of the other children of God around us, let us follow in the path of obedience, confident that there is hope for all, that we can rise above our temptations and repair our mistakes, and that we are needed in God's world.—*Ellen S. Bulfinch.*

INTERMEDIARY.

When from the prison of its body free,
My soul shall soar, before it goes to Thee,
Thou great Creator, give it power to know
The language of all sad, dumb things below.
And let me dwell a season still on earth
Before I rise to some diviner birth—
Invisible to men, yet seen and heard
And understood by sorrowing beast and bird—

Invisible to men, yet always near,
To whisper counsel in the human ear,
And with a spell to stay the hunter's hand
And stir his heart to know and understand,
To plant within the dull or thoughtless mind
The great religious impulse, to be kind.

Before I prune my spirit wings and rise
To seek my loved ones in their paradise—
Yea! even before I hasten on to see
That lost child's face so like a dream to me,
I would be given this intermediate rôle,
And carry comfort to each poor dumb soul,
And bridge man's gulf of cruelty and sin
By understanding of his lower kin.
'Twixt weary driver and the straining steed
On wings of mercy would my spirit speed,
And each should know, before his journey's end,
That in the other dwelt a loving friend.

From zoo and jungle, and from cage and stall,
I would translate each inarticulate call,
Each pleading look, each frenzied act and cry,
And tell the story to each passer-by;
And, of a spirit's privilege possessed,
Pursue indifference to its couch of rest,
And whisper in its ear until in awe
It woke and knew God's all-embracing law
Of Universal Life—the One in All.

Lord, let this mission to my lot befall.

Why not speak as though mankind were always on the eve of great certitude, of great joy? If you have learned to let your glance rest on sincerity, simpleness, truth, you will ever discover, deep down in all things, the silent, overpowering victory of that which you love.—*Maeterlinck.*

Religious liberty is not a mere concession, but a grand and positive method of arriving at truth. Not a destruction of things which imprisoned the human soul, it is ushering the captive into God's sunlight and air. Set the bird free, and he will sing the song that Heaven has taught him.—*Theodore C. Williams.*

Whatsoever demands the deepest courage and endurance of soul, of course, must unveil most perfectly its hidden strength.—*George Ware Briggs.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

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1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

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